



Mesa Chamber of Commerce

Thursday, September 9, 2010

Remarks by Gov. Jan Brewer

Thank you for allowing me to spend some time with you today -- to tell you what we've done to improve the business environment in Arizona in less than 600 days since I took the Oath of Office as Governor.

First, we had to deal with the consequences of five high-rolling years BEFORE I took office, when government grew far beyond what Arizonans could afford.

I faced a state budget deficit of nearly five billion dollars -- across two fiscal years -- and a federal government whose unfunded mandates and sweetheart deals were stealing Arizona's freedom and threatening to bankrupt our state.

Wholesale change was needed -- and -- the truth is -- in less than 600 days, WE'VE CHANGED EVERYTHING -- and, we've changed it for the BETTER.

We've changed the size of government.

We've changed the way government does business.

We've changed our policies and our priorities and the direction of our state. I believe that change -- the Arizona Comeback -- started in earnest on May 18th when voters overwhelmingly approved Proposition 100, telling us they understood the depth of the financial crisis in Arizona.

They told us they approved Proposition 100 for our educational system, for our universities and community colleges, for our public safety and for our most vulnerable.

But, I think we all recognized that Proposition 100 wasn't a cure-all. Though we've streamlined and reduced the size of government more than at any time before in state history, we're facing a one billion dollar deficit going into fiscal year 2012, which without new action will continue to grow in FY 2013. So, what are we doing about it?

Plenty.

We've permanently reduced state general fund spending by over two point two billion dollars and the state employee count by more than 10 percent.

My basic philosophy is that government just needs to get out of the way and let you -- our TRUE job creators -- grow your businesses the way YOU want to -- not the way the STATE wants you to.

My first official act as Governor was to issue a moratorium on rules, to reduce the regulatory burden on Arizona businesses.

And, I've been calling for tax reform since March 2009.

We must establish a more friendly tax code to retain existing employers, attract new investment capital and create high wage, sustainable jobs.

We must reform the business property tax, which currently discourages high-paying manufacturing jobs because we overtax capital investment.

And, when it comes to encouraging job creation, I'm committed to preparing for the future with new ideas and innovation.

That's why I established the Arizona Commerce Authority and a private-sector leadership board focused on growing and diversifying Arizona's economy and creating quality jobs -- including jobs in rural Arizona.

This quasi-public Authority replaced the old Commerce Department. We're introducing a 21st Century approach to advance Arizona's economy.

This new Authority is coordinating and integrating the efforts of key partners like Science Foundation Arizona -- our universities -- regional economic development groups -- and local communities -- all working together to secure success for the State of Arizona.

I've committed 10 million dollars to advance its mission through its approach to economic development. Meanwhile, we've attracted over **one billion dollars** in new capital investment, and helped create thousands of jobs. Businesses across ALL sectors have added almost 20-thousand jobs since the job loss peak in the Fall of 2009.

For example:

-- eBay announced its decision to expand its presence in Arizona,

-- Neptune Orient Lines moved here from Oakland, California – and international shipments are being coordinated right here in the southwest – the opportunities are incredible and businesses are recognizing it in new, innovative ways.

-- Just recently we announced Spanish solar manufacturer Rioglass Solar will locate to Surprise and create jobs for Arizonans.

The company produces curved glass sheets used in solar technology, adding to the significant progress Arizona is making to become a global leader in the renewable energy sector.

In fact, “Business Facilities” a national publication and location advisor for site selection -- for both solar energy manufacturing and the alternative energy industry – has now ranked Arizona as the “solar king.”

They noted Arizona offers “the highest solar power potential in the nation, and the state is by far the leading producer of equipment to capture these rays.”

This follows our successes in attracting other renewable energy projects to Arizona ---

-- Suntech Power Holdings chose Goodyear for the Chinese-based company's first U.S. manufacturing plant.

-- Tower Automotive and Linamar -- which are suppliers for Stirling Energy System's SunCatcher dishes – are locating to Arizona.

I'm ever mindful of the role education plays in job creation and sustaining the Arizona Comeback.

If we are going to build the economy for Arizona's second century, we must today begin preparing students and expect them to reach high academic standards.

To that end, we've enacted some of the most sweeping reforms in education that the state has seen.

We're allowing students who've mastered skills to move on to college when their families decide they're ready. And we're making sure that students don't move on if they're not ready.

Gone are those confusing labels grading schools -- like “performing” or “performing plus”. Instead, we have a system to grade schools by the same grades that students get: A, B, C, D and F.

How's that for transparency?

And we're also making sure our schools are able to recruit the talent they need by allowing alternative certification options so that we can get the best and brightest from every field into our classrooms.

We're giving teachers access to more student data so they can tailor their lessons to the needs of individual students.

And with that same data -- we can make SURE we're succeeding in the classroom. We can make SURE the system is, in fact, improving.

We're making sure the teachers -- to whom we trust our children's education -- are, in fact, helping them learn, in every classroom, every year.

We do this by making student performance a part of their own evaluations.

We're asking more of the students themselves, with new academic standards and increased requirements in math and science.

Our universities also play an important role both in educating and preparing students and in innovating and growing our economy.

First, of course, in order for our state to be competitive as a location for companies and to propel growth, we need to increase the number of Arizonans with a college degree.

One of my first directives to the higher education system when I became Governor was to increase the number of college graduates -- and to do it in a more cost effective way.

Second, while we're focused on costs, we must never lose sight of the students themselves -- we must ensure that they are actually making it THROUGH college.

To do that, maybe it's time to stop thinking about rewards based on enrollment -- but, instead, reward on COMPLETION -- make sure our funding system provides incentives to students to make it all the way through college.

From my first days in office as Governor, I've been demanding that the Obama administration fulfill ITS OWN security responsibilities to the citizens of our state:

-- Secure our southern border, enhance the rule of law, and protect Arizonans -- and ALL Americans -- from violence committed by organized crime syndicates, out-of-control drug cartels, violent human smugglers, and common criminals.

Legislation I signed into law -- Senate Bill 1070 -- supported by statewide law enforcement organizations -- and the vast majority of Arizonans -- simply

provides local sworn officers the same legal tools provided to federal authorities and their local law enforcement partners for many years.

I reject the Obama administration's notion that Arizona's border security is better than ever. The only thing that MIGHT be better than ever is the quality of the new signs the federal government put up ... warning signs on lands INSIDE our state, some as close as 30 miles to Phoenix, telling our own CITIZENS to keep out!

That's not protection, that's SURRENDER!

What is the height of hypocrisy is that my opponent -- and the entire Democratic ticket -- have been endorsed and supported by the very same unions, the Service Employees International Union and United Food and Commercial Workers Union, which are leading the boycott of Arizona.

Their mission is to HURT Arizona -- to kill Arizona jobs.

So, tell me, how can anyone credibly create jobs in Arizona when one of his principle supporters is sponsoring the economic boycott of Arizona?

And, simply put, it is downright OFFENSIVE that the Obama State Department included the State of Arizona and SB 1070 in a report to the United Nations Council on Human Rights.

Council members include such renowned human rights "champions" as Cuba and Libya.

Think about it.

Our own American government is submitting the duly enacted laws of Arizona for "review" by the United Nations.

Human rights as guaranteed by the United States and Arizona Constitutions are expressly protected in S.B. 1070 and defended vigorously by my Administration.

So, we've been forced to act on our own -- to defend our own safety and security.

And I think Washington has heard us now, don't you?

I'm also fighting ObamaCare and the eleven billion dollars it will cost Arizona over the next decade.

Health Care regulation is a power reserved to the STATES by the 10th Amendment. Congress has OVERREACHED by REQUIRING individuals to purchase health insurance -- and penalizing them if they don't.

We have joined this lawsuit because the issue is just too important for our State to sit back and do nothing.

I believe Barack Obama is wrong for Arizona.

I believe that Union driven Boycotts are wrong for Arizona.

I believe we can move forward, creating more jobs and economic prosperity, or we can move backward toward socialism -- and more government, more spending, more regulation.

I want to create jobs; not kill them.

I'm working for jobs and the people of Arizona -- and the right for the truth to be heard, always.

So, to all of you job creators -- I say THANK YOU -- thank you -- for setting Arizona back on the road to prosperity.

We've come so far in the last 600 days. We've changed everything ...

Arizona is moving again.

I believe our state has been revived.

I believe it has been renewed.

I believe faith in OURSELVES has been restored.

Thomas Jefferson once wrote: "I like the dreams of the future better than the history of the past."

I like those dreams, too -- and the sense that a wonderful power of achievement and confidence -- is stirring again in Arizona.

It belongs to our future; so let's nourish it and carefully tend to the fruits that it promises.

God bless you and your families, and may God bless Arizona and the United States of America. Thank you.